

America does not seek to produce more generations of war veterans; we are a peaceful Nation. But we'll always need the commitment and courage and honor that we find in our veterans. Those who have worn the uniform have made a contribution, not just to the defense of our Nation but to the character of our Nation. You've given your best to America, and in so many ways you are the best that is in America.

For all that, you have the deep respect of those who wear the uniform today, the Commander in Chief, as well. And you have the gratitude of a Nation that is in debt.

Thank you for letting me come. May God bless our veterans.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:20 a.m. at the Midwest Express Center. In his remarks, he referred to David, Zack, Benjamin, and Caldwell Spence, sons of Representative Spence; John F. Gwizdak, commander in chief, and James N. Goldsmith, senior vice commander in chief, Veterans of Foreign Wars; Bob Wallace, executive director, Veterans of Foreign Wars Washington office; Patricia Jankowski, president, and Diana Stout, senior vice president, Ladies Auxiliary to the Veterans of Foreign Wars; and Gov. Scott McCallum of Wisconsin. The President also referred to Executive Order 13214, President's Task Force To Improve Health Care Delivery for Our Nation's Veterans, published in the *Federal Register* on May 31; Public Law No. 106-117, the Veterans Millennium Health Care and Benefits Act, approved November 30, 1999; and Public Law No. 107-11, to expedite the construction of the World War II Memorial, approved May 28.

Exchange With Reporters at the Harley-Davidson Factory in Menomonee Falls, Wisconsin

August 20, 2001

The President. Everybody enjoying themselves in Waco?

Q. Love it.

The President. That's the spirit.

Situation in the Middle East

Q. Sir, there were some comments on the Sunday chat shows yesterday that you're disconnected in the Middle East peace process. Do you have any response to that?

The President. Every time I talk to you all, you ask me about the Middle East. Nothing has changed. We're very much engaged, trying to break the cycle of violence. I spoke to Ariel Sharon the other day. The Secretary of State is in constant dialog with the parties in the Middle East. In order to get to a peace process or discussions of peace, we must end the violence, and it requires two parties. It requires the desires of both parties to do that.

Thank you. Anything else?

It's great to be here in one of the world-class manufacturing companies, a company that not only is good at making a product, a company that is fabulous at marketing a product. The Harley-Davidson is a great example of the American entrepreneurial spirit. I look forward to having lunch with the workers and thank them for putting out such a quality product.

NOTE: The exchange began at 12:10 p.m. outside the Harley-Davidson Pilgrim Road Powertrain Operations factory. In his remarks, the President referred to Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks to Harley-Davidson Employees in Menomonee Falls

August 20, 2001

I really appreciate your hospitality. First of all, I'm really impressed by the quality of the workers who are here. It's obviously reflected in the quality of the product. Harley-Davidson is uniquely American. People love them. And some people are bold enough to drive them, and some of us aren't. [Laughter] I'm hitting the speed limit this year, 55. [Laughter]

But I really appreciate your hospitality and letting us come by and say hello. I can't tell you how great it is to be the President of the greatest country on the face of the Earth. I thank all the—there are more people than I can think that impress me. One of the things that impressed me, besides people's friendliness, is the number of people that said, "I pray for you and your family." For those of you that do that, thanks. It really is something unique about America—you

don't have to show me the party registration card.

It's really one of the fabulous parts of the job—people from all walks that really care enough about the Presidency that they will do that. I'm just going to keep giving it my best shot. I'm not going to try to figure out which way the wind is blowing—all come down and visit me in Texas.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:15 p.m. in the lunchroom at the Harley-Davidson Pilgrim Road Powertrain Operations factory. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at Truman High School in Independence, Missouri

August 21, 2001

Thank you all. Good morning. Thanks for that warm welcome. Mary Alice, thank you very much for your great introduction. And I want to thank the residents of the John Knox Senior Village for inviting me to come to Independence, Missouri. I'm glad I accepted.

It is exciting to be here. It's good to get out of the seat of power, Crawford, Texas—[laughter]—and come to Missouri. Speaking about Missouri, I want—it's important for all Presidents to remember what Harry Truman said. He said, "I try never to forget who I was and where I've come from and where I was going back to." That's one thing that Crawford, Texas, reminds me. [Laughter] It reminds me of where I came from. And after my service for this great country, where I'm going back to.

I want to thank you for giving me the chance to come and talk about a couple of subjects dear to my heart. I want to thank my friend, the Senator from the State of Missouri, Kit Bond, for the invitation and for his great service to Missouri and the United States. I want to thank United States Congressman Sam Graves for being here. Thank you for coming, Sam. I want to thank the United States Congresswoman from this district, Karen McCarthy. Thank you, Karen, for being here. I appreciate your time. Also here is the former Congressman from Missouri; Jim Talent is with us today, as well.

I wish my wife were with me. [Laughter] Like Harry Truman, I married well. [Laughter] She would love to be here at this school. I want to thank the school administrators, the principals. I want to thank the students who are fixing to start school tomorrow for giving us a chance to come to your beautiful campus.

To the students, let me say as plainly as I can: Your Government's important. You've got to pay attention to your Government. I don't care whether you're Republican or Democrat; you need to be involved in democracy in America. You need to take your vote seriously.

And having been in public service for a while, I can tell you, it's a noble profession. It's an important way to serve your country and your community. And you can do so without being the President, by the way. You can be a Congressperson; you can serve in the statehouse; you can work hard to get people elected; or you can serve your community by loving a neighbor like you'd like to be loved yourself. And that's one of the most important initiatives that we're working on.

And that's one of the most important initiatives we're working on in Washington, DC. It's called a Faith-Based and Community Initiative. It passed the House of Representatives, for which I'm grateful. We're now trying to get it out of the United States Senate. It's part of the unfinished business for this year.

Let me explain to you briefly what we're trying to do. We're trying to make sure that welfare is extended in a positive and compassionate way. We recognize in America there are some who hurt, some who have needs beyond the reach of Government, some who simply need love and compassion from a fellow American. There are children in our country who wonder whether or not the American Dream is meant for them, children whose mom or dad may be in prison. What this Nation needs is a Government that stands squarely on the side of the soldiers of the armies of compassion, those wonderful citizens who put their arm around a neighbor in need, and say, "I love you, brother," or "I love you, sister. What can I do to help make your life better?" Government should